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Statement submitted by Institute of Cultural Affairs International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Ukraine: A Socio-economic Process that Ensures a Fair Gender Balance

A large community of Ukrainian women from among the authorities, business and civil society expressed their willingness to actively participate in the sixty-third session of the Commission on the integration of advanced world experience in the development of human capital in Ukraine. In our opinion, this is necessary for:

- Establishing informal contact with the Commission on the Status of Women for advice from the Economic and Social Council;
- Establishment of productive business relations, practically focused on the development of human potential and the use of its hidden resources;
- Creation of international, including exchange programs for the development of local communities and their effective implementation in ensuring a fair gender balance in Ukraine.

Ukraine, like many other countries, continues to be at the point of bifurcation. Ukrainian women are increasingly asking themselves the following questions:

- "Why and why do people, especially leaders, act one way or another, and how does this relate to the thoughts and attitudes of ordinary people?";
- "What tools, models, technologies, approaches are most effective for resolving territorial conflicts and establishing peaceful processes of the country's development?";
- "What is the role of each woman in the socio-economic growth of the welfare of Ukraine?"

Today, Ukrainian women are the leading (in percentage / 75 per cent of the training participants are women) side of the transformation of Ukraine. They readily advocate for the integration of their experience, knowledge and intelligence into the world community, since living on the territory of a geopolitical rift and armed conflict, they understand that only by joining efforts can you restore and preserve peace in the country. In many ways, the path to the revival of Ukraine is the creation of a sustainable socio-economic process that ensures a fair gender balance.

As a result of the twenty-seven-year administration of the country, which is focused on meeting the private interest of individuals, we are now facing the following:

- Reduction of the population of Ukraine by more than 5 million people;
- The annexation of the Crimea and the armed invasion of Russia into the Lugansk and Donetsk regions of Ukraine;
- The emergence of 1.5 million internally displaced persons from the zones of conduct of armed conflict;
- Over 10,000 deaths of Ukrainians in the combat zone in the east of Ukraine, of which about 3,000 are military and 7,000 are civilians;
- The country is in the top ten countries in the world in terms of corruption;
- The level of social protection of all social and marginal groups is consistently in the zone of systemic violation of both the Constitution of Ukraine and human rights;
- The economic gap between the poor and the rich is growing rapidly;
- The rule of law is not implemented.

At the same time, Ukrainian society is consolidating and is looking for effective ways to counter the current inefficient, oligarchic, perverse system of government. Ukraine is rapidly integrating into the European and world community, both at the level of adaptation of European and world legislation, and at the level that has become more accessible due to the visa-free regime for Ukrainians crossing European borders. Women increase their activity, looking for effective ways of interaction and mutually beneficial partnership between themselves.

Traditionally, the Ukrainian woman plays the role of Bereginya, the guardian of the family, home and land. That is recognized by men. Therefore, they calmly perceive women as equal partners alongside themselves in business, public projects, public administration, and even as their leaders. Women constitute 54 per cent of the population of Ukraine.

In its turn, at the level of key decisions in the country there are only approximately 12 per cent of women in relation to 88 per cent of men which leads to a serious gender imbalance in government decisions that have already been adopted, which demonstrate the lack of human value and social protection. Under these conditions, there is no possibility of a balanced socio-economic process, which is designed to provide decent social protection to the people of Ukraine.

United Nations statistics shows that 70 per cent of income received by women invests in the social sector, while men are engaged in the accumulation of a resource for the purpose of its replication. The modern model of the socio-economic process in Ukraine is 12 per cent of the social protection of people and 88 per cent of the economy, which is created by men for themselves.

The result of the key decisions taken by men in the social sector of Ukraine is the amount of the established minimum pension amount for citizens of Ukraine, social benefits for disabled people, single mothers who suffered from the Chernobyl disaster, who were injured in the combat zone. Today, this is two times less than the minimum wage in Ukraine, which is less than USD2 a day and more than two times less than the recommended United Nations standards. This is a direct violation of the Basic Law — the Constitution of Ukraine, Article 46. Citizens have the right to social protection, including the right to ensure them in case of full, partial or temporary disability, loss of a breadwinner, unemployment due to circumstances beyond their control, and also in old age in other cases provided by law. Pensions, other types of social benefits and benefits, which are the main source of subsistence, must ensure a standard of living not lower than the subsistence minimum established by law. More and more often, such social policy is called the genocide of the Ukrainian people.

A huge problem is the provision of social housing for internally displaced persons, of whom there are more than 1,5 million people, as well as the provision of high-quality free medical services to them and the inability to participate in the upcoming elections.

Equal online access to obtaining administrative services for all social groups in Ukraine, including the blind, is positive. But the topic of social protection is not visible and priority on the websites of the President of Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

On April 1, 2014, the Local Government Reform started in Ukraine, which opened many new and additional opportunities for women. The reform has enabled women in rural areas to take a leading position in local government, which allows them to take an active part in the formation of local policy and its implementation.

In Ukraine, the women's political lobby is also gaining momentum; among women, there is a growing desire to serve people and the growth of professionalism in exercising civilian control over the actions of bodies of all levels of government.

One of the solutions to achieve a balance in the socio-economic process, the implementation of gender equality and social protection policies are training women in democratic leadership, analysing public policy, ethics of public administration, participatory management tools that will allow women of Ukraine to be bold and professional in making key decisions state and local level.

The Institute of Cultural Affairs International, uniting 42 countries around the world around the Technology of Participation in the implementation of its mission "Human Development", for five years of active work in Ukraine has implemented many different initiatives for the development of local communities at the "government-business-community". Strategic planning, facilitation, participatory leadership and participatory management have become one of the leading trends in the development of the country.

The world experience of more than 2000 facilitators of the Institute of Cultural Affairs International, assembled into a single technology Participative Strategic Planning, successfully works today in thousands of organizations at various levels in the post-Soviet space, where effective participative methods of consensus and management are being introduced. More than 1,000 facilitators work in Ukraine, and as many more in the countries of the former Soviet Union. Many of them are involved in local and state development projects. All this gives Ukraine the opportunity to take a leading position among the post-Soviet countries in all segments of the development of local communities.

This, in its turn, makes it possible to implement universal human democratic values in the daily life of local communities, and also makes possible the successful implementation of the United Nations goals in the field of human rights and sustainable development until 2030 in Ukraine.